

25 JAN 1996

Dompok - rotation

PRIME MINISTER HAS FINAL SAY ON ROTATION, SAY SABAH PARTIES

KOTA KINABALU, Jan 25 (Bernama) -- Parti Demokratik Sabah (PDS) and Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS) said today Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad should have the final say on the rotation of the Sabah Chief Minister's post.

PDS president Datuk Bernard Dompok said today the BN's promise to rotate the post every two years among the three major communities in the state was a pledge from the Prime Minister himself and thus he had the final say on the matter.

"We in the PDS had presented our views verbally to Dr Mahathir before and I will be making a written submission to the him next week," he told reporters at a ceremony where he received a RM50,000 donation from Sutera Harbour Resort for the Kadazandusun Language Institute.

Dompok, who is also the state Tourism and Environmental Development Minister, said he met Chief Minister Datuk Salleh Said Keruak today and had presented him his view on the rotation issue.

The rotation of the Chief Minister's post among the three communities -- Muslim Bumiputeras, Non-Muslim Bumiputeras and the Chinese for a two-year period was announced by Dr Mahathir in Beaufort while campaigning during the state election in March 1994.

"I think once the views of the parties had been presented to the Prime Minister and then he makes a decision and after that I don't think anybody should quarrel anymore (on the issue)," he said.

It was best that all parties leave the issue to Dr Mahathir, Dompok said.

PBRS president Datuk Joseph Kurup said his party had decided to give the mandate to the Prime Minister to decide on the issue.

In a statement, he urged all the parties to adopt a similar stand to ensure continued political stability in the state.

"Since component parties of the state BN still could not arrive at a consensus on the rotation issue, I think the issue is best left to the Prime Minister who is also the BN chairman for the sake of political stability and continued prosperity of the people," he said in a one-paragraph statement here today.

Eight component parties of the state BN are Umno, PDS, PBRS, Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), Angkatan Keadilan Rakyat Bersatu Sabah (Akar Bersatu), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the MCA the only component not represented in the Sabah Cabinet.

Under the rotation system, Salleh's term will expire on March 16 upon which a leader from the SAPP would take the helm.--BERNAMA